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*La Morale économique.* Par G. DE MOLINARI, correspondant de l'Institut, rédacteur en chef du *Journal des Économistes*. Guillaumin et C<sup>ie</sup>, Paris. — 8vo, 418 pp.

This book is closely related to the author's earlier work, *Les lois naturelles de l'économie politique*. Besides being generally suggestive, it will render an especial service to any whose idea of the relation of ethics to economics leads them either to confound the two or to try to force them into an unnatural separation. The views advanced in this volume will, indeed, hardly be accepted by believers in non-utilitarian ethics; it is premises, however, rather than deductions, that will be the object of criticism. The work is Ricardian in its exactness and consistency, as well as in its economic tendency.

Ethics and economics are, according to M. de Molinari, alike in recognizing as their *summum bonum* the attainment, by humanity as a whole, of the maximum of gratification at the cost of a minimum of pain. Man's organized efforts to attain this end constitute, practically, the sum total of social activities, and furnish the materials for ethics. Conflicts arise in the economic field; the individual is bound to subordinate his interests to those of his race. This is a general and permanent law; but the application of it varies with economic conditions. Rules of conduct change with advancing civilization. "At the origin of the species, competition had no other mode of operation than robbery and murder. Man lives at the cost of other species, and contends for his existence with them." The failure of wild game to furnish food for increasing numbers of men leads tribes of savages to seek to expel each other from common hunting grounds, or, in cannibal fashion, to make wild game of each other. The extermination of the less capable individuals is, in such conditions, advantageous to humanity and therefore moral. This rule is abolished when men are organized into nations; robbery and murder are no longer useful, and are therefore no longer justifiable within national limits. The contest for survival is transferred to a higher plane; and now international wars may be useful and right. The establishment of sufficiently close bonds, commercial or otherwise, among the nations of the world will end the utility of wars, and thus reverse their moral quality.

The author keeps constantly in view the natural economic laws discussed in his former treatise. He examines the protective and repressive action of criminal law, religion, and public opinion, and the influence of the fine arts, of literature, of the theatre, and of the school. He makes an extended study of "the genesis of morals," and of the crisis that has come in human relations in consequence of industrial and political progress. He incidentally puts in a clear light the action of

the tariff wars in which European nations are now engaged. He shows the effect of extending the privilege of self-government to great populations that are not ready for it, and exhibits the ignoble quality of modern politics which resolve elections into *quasi*-economic contests for the possession of lucrative positions. These are only a few of the prominent points in the discussion of the general theme. The concluding part of the work is devoted to a study of "the new order" that is establishing itself by the merging of many nations in a general "economic state." The volume contains appendices on "the results of the wars of the Revolution and the Empire," and on "a plan for the establishment of a league of neutral powers."

J. B. CLARK.

*Histoire des droits d'entrée et d'octroi à Paris.* Par A. DE ST. JULIEN et G. BIENAYMÉ. Paris, Paul Dupont, 1887. — 8vo, 148 pp., tableaux iv, 148 pp.

Among the most grievous of all forms of taxation are the municipal customs duties or excises which are still found to-day on the continent under the name of *octroi*. In the middle ages they were all but universal. The nineteenth century has witnessed strenuous efforts on the part of several governments to secure their total abolition. But in France these taxes continue in almost unabated vigor, and still form the main source of municipal income to-day. The present work is interesting as being the first to give an exhaustive history and description of the Parisian *octroi*. Mention is made of the indirect taxes during the Gallo-Roman régime, but the first definite trace of municipal duties is found in the twelfth century, on wine. From this period until the Revolution the taxes gradually increased in number and extent, until they covered almost everything. Some of the most common were known as *chaussees*, *petit ponts*, *rouages*, *rivages*, *conduits*, *chantelages*, *tonlieux*, *coutumes*, *congiés*, and *hallages*. The Revolution abolished them all, but they were quickly reinstituted, at least in part, under the somewhat timid name of *octroi municipal et de bienfaisance*. The only difference now was, that the taxes were henceforth levied only on commodities destined for local consumption. The revolution of 1848, and the financial exigencies of 1870-71 led to a further increase in the number of articles subject to the duties, so that to-day seventy-eight commodities, including all the necessities of life, are dutiable. An appendix contains a detailed description of each of the one hundred and twenty-three tariffs, beginning with the year 1121.

E. R. A. S.